

IMMUNIZATION PROGRAM UPDATE

January 5, 2007

Guidance for Purchasing Preservative Free Influenza Products

Washington legislation was passed in 2006 creating RCW 70.95M.115*. The law limits the amount of thimerosal that can be contained in vaccines administered to:

- Pregnant women and
- Children younger than 3 years of age.

The legislation becomes effective July 1, 2007. At that time, it will be against Washington law to administer influenza vaccine containing more than trace amounts of thimerosal to pregnant women and children less than 3 years old. They may be vaccinated with inactivated influenza vaccine containing trace levels or no thimerosal.

The law does not apply to persons who are 3 years of age and older or those who are not pregnant. All influenza vaccines licensed for persons 3 years of age and older and those who are not pregnant may be used to protect them from influenza disease.

Health care providers should ensure the appropriate formulation and amount of influenza vaccine is available for patients affected by the law during the 2007-2008 influenza season. Providers should estimate the number of pregnant women and those or younger than 3 years of age and in need of influenza vaccination they expect to vaccinate during the 2007-2008 influenza season. This information should be used when planning for the influenza vaccine pre-booking process.

Pre-booking for certain influenza vaccine manufacturers and distributors will begin in January. The Department of Health will be ordering preservative free influenza vaccine for children less than 3 years of age and for pregnant adolescents less than 19 years of age. As in previous years, orders for state supplied influenza vaccine will also include vaccine for children less than 19 years of age who meet the criteria for the use of state supplied vaccine.

The information on the following pages is provided to assist you in complying with this new law when ordering influenza vaccine. Diversifying your influenza vaccine supply may provide the best opportunity to ensure timely and adequate influenza vaccine supplies to meet your patient needs.

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- A) The following influenza vaccine meets the new law's mercury limit and is currently licensed for use in children younger than 3 years old:**

<u>Manufacturer</u>	<u>Trade Name</u>	<u>Packaged as</u>
Sanofi Pasteur Inc.		Fluzone® no preservative prefilled 0.25 mL pediatric single dose syringe

- B) The following influenza vaccines meet the new law's mercury limit and may be given to pregnant women:**

<u>Manufacturer</u>	<u>Trade Name</u>	<u>Packaged as</u>
Novartis Vaccines	Fluvirin® preservative free	prefilled 0.5 mL syringes
GlaxoSmithKline	Fluarix®	prefilled 0.5 mL unit dose syringes
Sanofi Pasteur Inc.	Fluzone® no preservative	0.5 mL single dose vial
Sanofi Pasteur Inc.	Fluzone® no preservative	0.5 mL single dose prefilled syringe

- C) The following influenza vaccines do not meet the new law's mercury limit for children less than 3 years of age or pregnant women:**

<u>Manufacturer</u>	<u>Trade Name</u>	<u>Packaged as</u>
Novartis Vaccines	Fluvirin®	5 mL multi-dose vial
Sanofi Pasteur Inc.	Fluzone®	5 mL multi-dose vial

Additional Resources

For additional information about this topic, please contact your local health department, or the Washington State Department of Health Immunization Program CHILD Profile, (360) 236-3595.

For more information about mercury and vaccine safety, please visit:

<http://www.fda.gov/cber/vaccine/thimerosal.htm>

<http://www.immunize.org/safety/thimerosal.htm>

<http://www.cdc.gov/nip/vacsafe/concerns/thimerosal/default.htm>

*RCW 70.95M.115 can be found at: <http://search.leg.wa.gov/pub/textsearch/> This is an excerpt from the law: **RCW 70.95M.115** (1) Beginning July 1, 2007, a person who is known to be pregnant or who is under three years of age shall not be vaccinated with a mercury-containing vaccine or injected with a mercury-containing product that contains more than 0.5 micrograms of mercury per 0.5 milliliter dose. (2) Notwithstanding subsection (1) of this section, an influenza vaccine may contain up to 1.0 micrograms of mercury per 0.5 milliliter dose.